

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 06311 251215Z
ACTION NEA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EUR-08 ACDA-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00
EB-04 IO-06 L-01 NSAE-00 NSC-05 SP-02 OES-02
TRSE-00 PM-03 /062 W
-----048318 251221Z /13

R 211318Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1107
INFO AMCONSUL CALCUTTA
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMCONSUL MADRAS

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 6311

LIMDIS

FOL IS BOMBAY'S 0989 RPTD YOU DTD APR 21, 0913Z SIGNED
COURTNEY

QUOTE

CONFIDENTIAL BOMBAY 0989

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ENRG, TECH, MNUC, IN
SUBJ: TARAPUR OPERATIONS.

REF: A) NEW DELHI 6142 B) NEW DELHI 6151

1. SETHNA SEEMS TO HAVE GIVEN THOMSON THE LINE HE OFTEN TAKES
WITH FOREIGN JOURNALISTS, SCHOLARS OR OTHERS WITH HOWM HE
DEALS AT ARMS LENGTH. IN SUCH DISCUSSIONS SETHNA EMPHASIZES HIS
DIFFICULTIES AND LEAVES THE IMPRESSION OF A GLOOMIER PROGNOSIS
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THAN THE FACTS WARRANT. I HAVE TRIED ON MAY OCCASIONS TO CHECK
HIS PROPESTY FOR FORECASTING A CUT OFF IN U.S. SUPPLIES. HE
OST A BET TO ME A YEAR AGO ON XSNM 845 AS A RESULT OF HIS FONDESS
FOR PREDICTING AN IMMINENT END OF UF 6 SUPPLIES. ON A HAPPIER
NOTE CONTRARY TO WHAT HE TOLD THOMSON, JUST LAST WEEK HE TOLD DCM
BLOOD AND FSO THIBAUT THAT HE EXPECTED TO GET XSNM 1060 BUT
BEYOND THAT HE SAID HE WAS NOT AT ALL OPTIMISTIC.

2. I DON'T KNOW WHY HE WOULD SAY THAT TARAPUR WILL HAVE TO BE CLOSED DOWN IN A YEAR'S TIME UNLESS HE WAS REFERRING TO THE FUEL STORAGE PROBLEM RATHER THAN FUEL SUPPLY, THE CONTEXT IN WHICH THOMSON REPORTED HIS REMARKS. IT IS TRUE THAT WITHOUT PROMPT AND EFFECTIVE ACTION ON THE STORAGE PROBLEM ONE OF THE REACTORS AT TARAPUR WOULD HAVE TO BE SHUT DOWN EARLY NEXT YEAR. HOWEVER AS INDICATED IN BOMBAY'S 1793 OF JULY 28, 1977 THE ARRIVAL OF XSNM 845 PROVIDED ENOUGH FUEL TO FEED TAPS AT LEAST THROUGH MARCH 1980--TWO YEARS HENCE. SINCE TAPS HAS BEEN OPERATING WELL BELOW FULL POWER OUTPUT THE LAST SIX MONTHS THERE IS SUFFICIENT FUEL THERE FOR OPERATIONS AT FULL OUTPUT THROUGH JULY OF 1980.

3. NEXT WEEK I WILL DO A PRECISE UPDATE OF ANALYSIS IN BOMBAY'S 1793.

4. I FIND THOMSON'S REPORT OF SETHNA'S VIEWS ON SAFEGUARDS DISTURBING EVEN THOUGH I AGREE WITH THOMSDN'S IMPLICIT CONCLSION THAT SETHNA IS LEAVING THE DORR OPEN FOR CONTINUING COOPERATION WITH THE WEST IN THE NUCLEAR FIELD. I ALSO AGREE WITH THOMSON THAT SETHNA IN HIS CAPACITY AS GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND IAEC CHIRMAN WOULD NOT PERMIT POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS TO CAUSE HIM TO OBJECT TO SAFEGUARDS. SETHNA HAS ALWAYS BEEN CAREFUL TO INSIST THAT POLITICAL DISCUSSIONS ON ALL NUCLEAR MATTERS ARE TAKEN IN NEW DELHI AND ARE OUTSIDE HIS PROVINCE.

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5. INDISCUSSING SAFEGUARDS WITH OUTSIDERS SETHNA HAS OFTEN MADE SUCH STATEMENTAS AS "WE JUST DO NOT WANT THEM LOOKING OVER OUR SHOULDER" AND "I JUST DO NOT LIKE THEM." HOWEVER AS REPORTED BOMBAY'S 0929 ONLY A WEEK AGO IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT SETHNA DOES INRED BELIEVE THAT THE SAFEGUARD APPROACH WE ARE INSISTING UPON COULD SERIOUSLY EFFECT INDIA'S R AND D PROGRAM. IT SEEMS TO ME HAT SETHNA'S MESSAGE ON SAFEGUARDS IS THAT IN THE BEST OF ALL POSSIBLE WORLDS FULL-SCOPE SAFEGUARDS COULD BE APPLIED IN A WAY THAT WOULD OT HINDER HIS BREEDER PROGRAM BUT THAT WHEN VIEWD IN THE LIGHT OF THE BRITISH EFFORT TO EXTEND THE IAEC DEFINITION OF SAFEGUARDS AND PARTICULARLY IN THE LIGHT OF THE U.S. NON-PROLIFIERATION LEGISLATION SAFEGUARDS COULD VERY WELL SERIOUSLY IMPEDE INDIA'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM. DESPITE CONGEN'S EFFORTS TO KEEP MATTER IN PROPER PROSPECTIVE, NYE'S ARTICLE IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS HAS BEEN WIDELY CITED HERE AS A CLEAR INDICATION OF U.S.G. INTENTION TO DO WHAT IT CAN TO CHECK NATIONAL PRODUCTION OF PLUTONIUM, WHICH SETHNA REGARDS AS CENTRAL TO HIS BREEDER PROGRAM.

UNQUOTE

GOHEEN

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: NEGOTIATIONS, NUCLEAR FUELS, NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS, NUCLEAR SAFEGUARDS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978NEWDE06311
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780176-0305
Format: TEL
From: NEW DELHI
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780431/aaaaazts.tel
Line Count: 114
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 2715efa9-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: 78 NEW DELHI 6142, 78 NEW DELHI 6151
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07 sep 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2892461
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TARAPUR OPERATIONS.
TAGS: ENRG, TECH, MNUC, IN
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/2715efa9-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014